

Wherefore, what is claimed is:

1. In a computer system having a user interface including a display with a display screen, a multiple-mode window presentation process comprising
5 process actions for:

displaying one or more peripheral graphic user interface (GUI) elements in a first appearance mode when a window displayed on the display screen is maximized; and

displaying one or more of the peripheral GUI elements in a second
10 appearance mode when the window is displayed with a less-than-maximized size within the display screen, wherein the second appearance mode is substantially different from the first appearance mode.

2. The process of Claim 1, wherein the process action of displaying
15 one or more peripheral GUI element in the second appearance mode, comprises displaying said one or more peripheral GUI elements so as to have an appearance designed to attract the attention of a user.

3. The process of Claim 1, wherein the process action of displaying
20 one or more of the peripheral graphic user interface (GUI) elements in the first appearance mode, comprises displaying said one or more peripheral GUI elements so as to have an appearance that is designed to not distract a user from the content of the window.

4. The process of Claim 3, wherein the process action of displaying
25 said one or more peripheral GUI elements so as to have an appearance that is designed to not distract a user from the content of the window, comprises an action of displaying said one or more peripheral GUI elements with a substantially opaque background.

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5. The process of Claim 3, wherein the process action of displaying said one or more peripheral GUI elements so as to have an appearance that is designed to not distract a user from the content of the window, comprises an action of displaying a background of said one or more peripheral GUI elements in a color that reduces the distractive effect of the elements on a user in comparison to the background color employed when displaying these same elements in said second appearance mode.

6. The process of Claim 5, wherein said color that reduces the distractive effect of said one or more peripheral GUI elements on the user is black.

7. The process of Claim 3, wherein the process action of displaying said one or more peripheral GUI elements so as to have an appearance that is designed to not distract a user from the content of the window, comprises an action of displaying a peripheral GUI element comprising lettering and/or graphic items with said lettering and/or graphic items in a color that reduces the distractive effect of the element on a user in comparison to the color employed when displaying the same lettering and/or graphic items in said second appearance mode.

8. The process of Claim 7, wherein said color of the lettering and/or graphic items that reduces the distractive effect of the peripheral GUI element on the user is white.

9. The process of Claim 3, wherein the process action of displaying said one or more peripheral GUI elements so as to have an appearance that is designed to not distract a user from the content of the window, comprises an action of displaying a peripheral GUI element comprising lettering and/or graphic items with said lettering and/or graphic items dimmed such that the brightness of

said items is lower in comparison to the color employed when displaying the same lettering and/or graphic items in said second appearance mode.

5 10. The process of Claim 3, wherein the process action of displaying said one or more peripheral GUI elements so as to have an appearance that is designed to not distract a user from the content of the window, comprises an action of displaying a peripheral GUI element comprising control buttons and/or indicator bars with said control buttons and/or indicator bars in a color that reduces the distractive effect of the element on a user in comparison to the color
10 employed when displaying the same control buttons and/or indicator bars in said second appearance mode.

 11. The process of Claim 10, wherein said color of the control buttons and/or indicator bars that reduces the distractive effect of the peripheral GUI
15 element on the user is gray.

 12. The process of Claim 1, wherein said one or more peripheral GUI elements comprises a frame displayed around the periphery of the window having a title bar disposed across the top of the window, and wherein the
20 process action of displaying said one or more peripheral GUI elements so as to have an appearance that is designed to not distract a user from the content of the window, comprises an action of displaying just the title bar and eliminating all other portions of the frame.

25 13. The process of Claim 1, wherein said one or more peripheral GUI elements comprises a task bar displayed at an edge of the display screen.

 14. The process of Claim 1, wherein said one or more peripheral GUI elements comprises a side bar displayed at an edge of the display screen.

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15. The process of Claim 1, wherein the process action of displaying said one or more peripheral GUI elements so as to have an appearance that is designed to not distract a user from the content of the window, comprises an action of displaying all the peripheral GUI elements present in the display screen so as to have an appearance that is designed to not distract a user from the content of the window.

16. The process of Claim 1, wherein said less-than-maximized size corresponds to a default size that the window is automatically displayed at whenever opened and displayed on the display screen.

17. The process of Claim 1, wherein said less-than-maximized size corresponds to a default size that the window is automatically displayed at whenever it is restored to said less-than maximized size after being maximized.

18. The process of Claim 1, wherein the second appearance mode is substantially different from the first appearance mode in regard to at least of the (i) color, (ii) transparency, (iii) reflectivity, (iv) size, and (v) texture that is exhibited by said one or more peripheral GUI elements.

19. A window presentation management system, comprising:
a general purpose computing device comprising a display screen;
and
a computer program comprising program modules executable by the computing device, wherein the computing device is directed by the program modules of the computer program to,
display one or more peripheral graphic user interface (GUI) elements so as to exhibit a non-distracting appearance when a window displayed on the display screen is maximized, thereby concentrating a user's attention on the content of the window, and

display one or more of the peripheral GUI elements so as to exhibit an appearance designed to attract the attention of a user when the window is displayed with a less-than-maximized size within the display screen.

5 20. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for managing the presentation of windows on the display screen of a computing device, said computer-executable instructions comprising:

 displaying at least one peripheral graphic user interface (GUI) element so as to exhibit an appearance designed to attract the attention of a user when a window displayed on the display screen is displayed with a less-
10 than-maximized size within the display screen; and

 whenever the window is maximized within the display screen, displaying at least one of the peripheral GUI elements with a de-emphasized appearance which in comparison to the appearance thereof when the window is
15 displayed with a less-than-maximized size avoids distracting users as much from the content of the window.

 21. A computer-implemented process for managing the presentation of windows on the display screen of a computing device, comprising process
20 actions for:

 displaying at least one peripheral graphic user interface (GUI) element so as to exhibit an appearance designed to attract the attention of a user when a window displayed on the display screen is displayed with a less-
25 than-maximized size within the display screen, said appearance being one that makes the at least one peripheral GUI element appear to have a prescribed degree of transparency so that items displayed underneath the element can be seen through the element; and

 whenever the window is maximized within the display screen, displaying at least one of the peripheral GUI elements with a de-emphasized
30 appearance which in comparison to the appearance thereof when the window is displayed with a less-than-maximized size avoids distracting users as much from

the content of the window, wherein the de-emphasized appearance comprises a substantially opaque look and a black background color.

- 5 22. A window presentation management system, comprising:
 a general purpose computing device comprising a display screen;
and
 a computer program comprising program modules executable by
the computing device, wherein the computing device is directed by the program
modules of the computer program to,
10 display at least one peripheral graphic user interface (GUI)
element so as to exhibit an appearance designed to attract the attention of a
user when a window also displayed on the display screen is displayed with a
less-than-maximized size within the display screen, wherein said appearance
comprises exhibiting a prescribed degree of transparency such that items
15 displayed underneath the at least one element can be seen through the element
to an extent dictated by the degree of transparency.
 display one or more of the peripheral GUI elements so as to
exhibit a non-distracting appearance when the window is maximized, thereby
concentrating a user's attention on the content of the window, wherein said non-
20 distracting appearance comprises exhibiting a degree of transparency that is at
least substantially reduced in comparison to said prescribed degree of
transparency.
- 25 23. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable
instructions for managing the presentation of windows on the display screen of a
computing device, said computer-executable instructions comprising:
 displaying one or more peripheral graphic user interface (GUI)
elements in a first appearance mode when a window displayed on the display
screen is maximized; and
30 displaying one or more of the peripheral GUI elements in a second
appearance mode when the window is displayed with a less-than-maximized size

within the display screen, wherein the second appearance mode represents a substantial change from the first appearance mode.